

Interview with Of the Wand and the Moon (2003)



Can you explain us how you passed from a metal band to a Dark Folk project ? It is an old dream that you couldn't realize before ?

Alongside of my former band Saturnus, I have had a love to the Dark wave / Darkfolk genre, for a long time. And as my acoustic ideas and esoteric inspiration began to increase I decided to do something about it. The music demanded it. It just came gradually, as I had more and more acoustic songs. It would also have been strange to incorporate it in Saturnus, as I was the only one who had a desire to study the occult, mythology, runes... except for our old guitar player who left before the first Saturnus album. It would not have been good to have someone express something complex, without having the slightest idea what the hell was going on in the lyrics and music. I must admit I even felt that way sometimes with Saturnus, where people didn't really know what was going on, and had no desire in getting into it. Maybe that was also a reason why I had to leave that band.

Your style is rather close of the World Serpent artists one, both regarding to the music, to the lyrics and to the pagan imagery... Do you feel you're part of this movement ?

I've always loved the music of Current 93, Death in June, Fire and Ice, Der Blutharsch, Blood axis, NON, etc. So naturally I have gotten a huge amount of inspiration from that side, and I also feel very drawn to the runes, magick etc.

What are your principal influences for this project ? Traditionnal folk ? Dark stuffs ? No influences ?

As in the forementioned, I really enjoyed and felt inspired by the bands of this genre, and of course folk lore, magick, runes and so forth.

What's the significance of the name Of the Wand and the Moon ?

There is a lot of symbolism to the name. The wand represents the magick aspect and the moon the inspiration of the night.

And what's the significance of the bind runes on the album's cover ?

It is simply an old rune code for « Gandr » and « Mauna » which means « Wand » and « Moon ».

Last question about your words : what does « May the raven guard and the wand and the moon protect » ?

Well, that will be one of life's mysteries.

You seem to be an Odinist / Asatruar... Do you practise this religion in an « official » organization, or is it more a « feeling », a way of seeing life ?

I am very taken by the nordic past and I feel somehow more close to the heathen path, than Christianity... but as a W.C. Fields quote :

« I wouldn't join any club that would have me as a member ». He he....

Well, I have a really hard time trusting anybody but myself these days, and I haven't really felt the need to be a part of an organisation. Here's another quote : « Mieux vaut être seul que mal accompagné ».

I must be in my quote-mood today.

What for do you use the runes ? Symbolism ? Divination ? Protection ?

All the above !

What do you think about the growing use of the runes in Europe – it is just a fashion, or does it mark a deep return to the ancient spirituality ?

At some point I think it is ok with this growing interest in the runes, and at some point it's not a good sign. Sadly, there are two sides to every story. Especially when you see these new-age plastic rune « beginners set » with a manual. That just makes me sick. Runes are not to be taken lightly. Runes are a powerful tool, and they should be handled with care and respect. If one wants to learn runelore then learn the real thing instead of buying one of these fake products. It will take a lot of time and dedication, but it's worth it.

I should also mention here, that I don't consider myself an authority on the matter. My first priority is to make music as I see myself as a musician, but I do enjoy studying runelore whenever I have time.

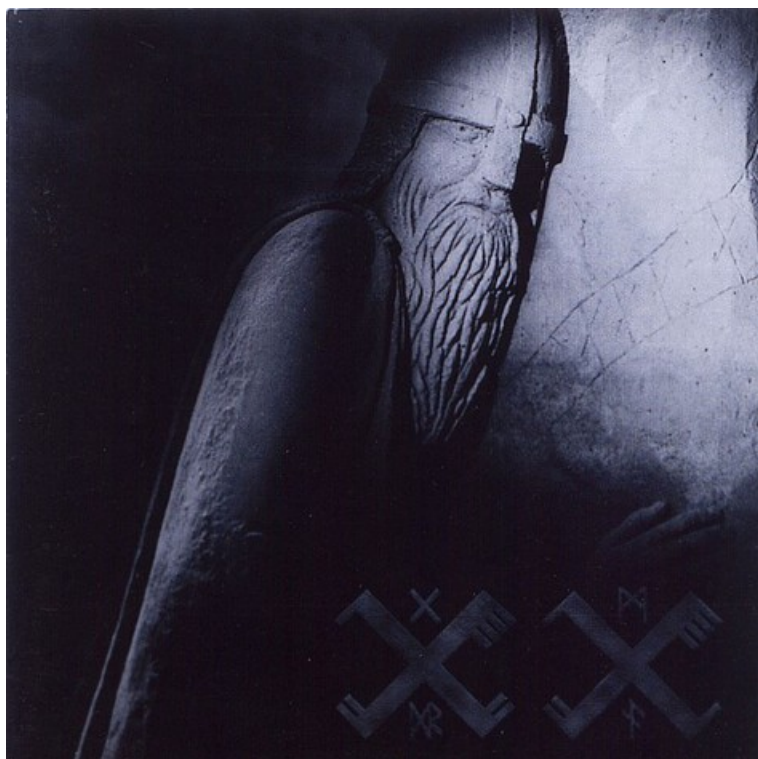
Then there is also the problem with the paranoia that sweeps across Europe in these times. Nowadays it takes a little courage just to use the runes I think. I use them for personal reasons, I'm not a politician.

What are your own principal deities ?

I don't know what I believe in anymore. I just try to do my own thing and follow my own path at the best of my abilities. Trying to keep my head above the water.

What does the raven represent for you ?

Odin had two ravens that were his eyes in the world. They were said to be wise. His soul and mind you might say. Perhaps the raven are messengers.



More and more people awake to celebrate the old Europe, its myths, its art... do you want(ed) to participate to this revival with your music ?

If it is not reduced to new-age bullshit, yes maybe, but I basically make this music for my own pleasure.

Some bands and lots of people are (or pretend to be) dead serious and very militant... On the contrary you seem to have kept a sense of humour...

If you mean some of the photo's on my web site, yes, but I don't think there is much happiness, as for my music. That is not how I feel when I make it anyway.

Your music is both calm and quiet, and slightly dark, threatening... What are the emotions that inspire you ? Do you want to play with the listener's emotions ?!

I remember when I heard the track *The descent of long Satan and Babylon* by Current 93. It was the first song I heard by them and I think that kind of calm atmosphere appealed alot to me. It seemed to me a much stronger expression than if it had been sung in say a Black Metal tune, screaming your head off. I really love this arcane and calm touch.

Metal music is often criticized and ridiculed in the « dark » scene (including gothic, ambient, industrial and folk)... As an ex-metal band member, what do you think of this in general, and do you think Metal and Dark Folk, for example, are compatible ?

I have also missed a sort of mood in the metal genre. That was also why I tried to incorporate that style a bit in Saturnus, but it is two somewhat different expressions. I still enjoy some metal music, though the music I listens to the most at home is Dark Folk.

Your lyrics deal both with religious topics, and more intimate things... Which is rather original in this scene where "love songs" are banned. Your comment on this ?

I can only write music which concern me as :OTWATM: is a absolutely a personal (egotistic) project, so unfortunately to some, alot of love songs appear and will indeed appear on my future material as I really feel lost these days.

Who is that girl with who compared the Alpes are vallies ?

Sorry to say, it was my ex. girlfriend Julie. I have been drunk ever since she left. I am weak in that matter. I tend to dedicate my life to those that I truly love (and that is not many).

Checking out your site I saw this photo with the « road 666 »... One song's lyrics are taken from Aleister Crowley. Beside your interest in Paganism, are you seriously interested in Occultism and / or Satanism (I guess the photo was just humor) ?

The picture was taken in 98' when the drummer of Saturnus (now the Loveless), and I were crossing the states for a holiday. I just thought it was a fun thing, but yes, I really enjoyed reading some of Crowleys work and I do have an interest in Occultism / satanism.

Let's go back to the music. What are your future plans ? Another full-lenght album ? Concerts ? Collaborations ?

I will be in the studio late August, early September to record the next full-length which will be called :*Emptiness:Emptiness:Emptiness:* and I'm also hoping to record a MCD at the same time which will be called *Lucifer*. My friend Hansen has just released his ambient / industrial project, Unveiled, where I have tributed with a bit of vocals. The CD is called *Silver* and released on World serpent. As for concerts I really don't know. Alot of people have asked me to play live, but for the moment I'm more into making records. Perhaps there will be some concerts in the future when, and if I feel I have the energy.